

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TORUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3179

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 8396

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, JO, IR

SUBJ: IRANIAN ARMS TRANSFERS

1. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, WE HAVE ON REPEATED OCCASIONS BROUGHT TO ATTENTION OF GOI OFFICIALS REQUIREMENTS OF USG THIRD COUNTRY TRANSFER LAW AND REGULATIONS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO STRESS THIS THEME. AMBASSADOR MOST RECENTLY ON AUGUST 18 DISCUSSED MATTER WITH SHAH. HE, LIKE OTHER SENIOR IRANIAN OFFICIALS, IS FULLY AWARE OF U.S. REQUIREMENTS AND, WE ARE CONFIDENT, INTENDS TO COMPLY WITH THOSE REGULATIONS.

2. HOWEVER, EXTERNAL PRESSURES AND NATURE OF IRANIAN MILITARY ORGANIZATION WORK AGAINST THAT INTENTION. ON FIRST POINT, IRAN HAS AND IS ACQUIRING ABUNDANT MILITARY HARDWARE. IT IS SURROUNDED BY POORER NATIONS WHICH PERCEIVE SECURITY THREAT AND URGENT NEED FOR MILITARY EQUIPMENT. AS A COUNTRY WITH OLD TRADITION OF ISLAMIC SOLIDARITY AND GENEROSITY TOWARDS LESS FORTUNATE NEIGHBORS AND A NEW VISION OF REGIONAL INFLUENCE, IRAN FEELS COMPELLED TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO REQUESTS FOR MILITARY
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ASSISTANCE FROM ITS NEIGHBORS, PARTICULARLY JORDAN AND

PAKISTAN. TRANSFER PROBLEM HAS TWO TERMINALS WHERE WE CAN EXERT INFLUENCE, I.E., AT RECIPIENT AS WELL AS DONOR END. SO FAR WE HAVE TRIED TO HANDLE PROBLEM MAINLY IN DISCUSSIONS WITH LATTER.

3. ON SECOND POINT, IRANIAN MILITARY IS NO EFFICIENT MACHINE, SMOOTHLY GEARED FOR ORDERS ISSUED AT SENIOR LEVEL TO BE CARRIED OUT BY JUNIORS WITHOUT DEVIATION. IF TRANSFERS TO THIRD COUNTRIES WERE HANDLED BY INEXPERIENCED OFFICERS UNFAMILIAR WITH USG REGULATIONS, WE COULD EXPECT UNINTENTIONAL VIOLATIONS. IRANIAN ARMED SERVICES ARE NOT SO WELL STAFFED OR INTERNALLY COORDINATED AS TO PRECLUDE THAT POSSIBILITY.

4. ACCORDINGLY, WE SUGGEST THAT OUR AMBASSADORS IN AMMAN AND ISLAMABAD BE REQUESTED TO APPROACH SENIOR LEVELS OF THEIR HOST GOVERNMENTS (INCLUDING HUSSEIN AND BHUTTO) TO EXPLAIN DANGERS INHERENT IN QUIETLY ARRANGED IRANIAN TRANSFERS OF U.S.-ORIGIN EQUIPMENT TO THIRD COUNTRIES. SUCH TRANSFERS EVENTUALLY COME TO LIGHT. STRESS SHOULD BE LAID ON POSSIBLE DAMAGE TO AMERICAN ROLE IN THIS REGION AS WELL AS TO OUR MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS WITH IRAN, JORDAN AND PAKISTAN FROM CONGRESSIONAL REACTION, IF U.S. REGULATIONS ARE NOT HEEDDED. POINT OF CONVERSATIONS SHOULD BE TO URGE THAT GOJ AND GOP KEEP US INFORMED AS THEY MAKE THEIR REQUESTS FOR U.S.-ORIGIN MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM IRAN. WHEN WE ARE INFORMED IN ADVANCE OF TRANSFERS WE CAN INITIATE NECESSARY PROCEDURES TO MAKE TRANSFERS POSSIBLE IF, OF COURSE, SUCH PROPOSALS ARE IN ACCORD WITH USG POLICY.

5. IF DEPARTMENT AGREES THAT THIS INITIATIVE WOULD BE USEFUL, WE BELIEVE GUIDANCE SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR AMMAN AND ISLAMABAD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. FOREGOING DRAFTED PRIOR TO GENERAL TOUFANIAN'S APPROACH TO US RE TRANSFER OF ADDITIONAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO PAKISTAN (SEPTEL. IF THIS PROPOSAL HAD BEEN PASSED TO IIAF OR IIGF FOR ACTION, RATHER THAN TOUFANIAN, IT MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN ACTED ON WITHOUT CONSULTATIONS WITH US. THIS UNDERSCORES NEED TO TACKLE TRANSFER PROBLEM FROM BOTH DONOR AND

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